(ii) To stimulate sustained economic growth by providing access to essential raw materials, intermediates, components, consumables and capital goods required for augmenting production.

(iii) To enhance the technological strength and efficiency of Indian agriculture, industry and services, thereby improving their competitive strength while generating new employment opportunities, and to encourage the attainment of internationally accepted standards of quality.

(iv) To provide consumers with good quality products at reasonable prices.

The Policy initiatives taken this year through the EXIM Policy have been generally welcomed by the Trade & Industry.

(c) United States of America is highest importer of Indian goods.

Targets for Industrial Growth

16. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the targets set for the industrial growth during 1997-98 and 1998-99;

(b) how far these have been achieved;

(c) what has been the preference of industrial sector during the first half of 1999-2000;

(d) the details of steps taken to accelerate industrial growth; and

(e) what has been the contribution of the consumer goods industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) Planning Commission has fixed an average 8.2% growth rate target for the Ninth Plan. According to figures released by Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) the growth rate during 1997-98, 1998-99 and April—September 1999-2000 are 6.6%, 4.0% and 6.4% respectively.

(c) Industrial Entrepreneurs Memoranda and Letter of Intent statistics reveal preference for textile and chemical industries during the first half of 1999-2000.

(d) The steps taken to improve industrial growth, *inter alia*, are:

(i) special package announced for revival of growth in exports;

(ii) repeal of ULCRA and incentive to house ownership;

(iii) the Government has allowed buy back of shares and inter-corporate loans to boost investment and revive the capital market;

(iv) a new Power Policy announced;

(v) foreign companies with 100% participation in banking sector permitted;

(vi) excise duties rationalised;

(vii) income tax rate and custom duties on infrastructure projects reduced;

(viii) liberalisation of inflow of FDI/NRI/OCB investment;

(ix) the guidelines for foreign equity investment in NBFC have further been modified;

(x) setting up of National Accreditation Boards including a National Patent Office and a National Benchmarking Patent House to promote integration of best practices in the Indian industry;

(xi) setting up of Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) to provide single point interface between foreign investors and Government machinery;

(xii) restoration of 100% MODVAT credit;

(e) With a weight of 28.36 percent in the index of industrial production the consumer goods sector grew at 5.7%, 2.4% and 4.0% during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 (April-September) respectively.

Export from Himachal Pradesh

17. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: